

NEWSLETTER OF THE **DETROIT CHAPTER** OF
THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN INCORPORATED

April
2017

THE

Hawk's Cry II



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TAIDETNewsletter@Comcast.Net

Distinguished Warrior



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SITES OF INTEREST

Simply SELECT The Link

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[TA National Museum](#)

[TA National Historic Site](#)

ON THE COVER: DOTA Alexander Jefferson giving acceptance speech for receiving a 2017 Urban League of Detroit Distinguished Warrior award.

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THE PRESIDENTS' PAGE



THE NEXT TWO CHAPTER MEETINGS

Thursday, 9 March 2017 and 13 April 2017 @ 1900 hours (7:00 p.m.)

Please Arrive between 6:30 & 6:45pm-before doors are locked.

At 613 Abbott in Downtown Detroit (3rd and Abbott)

REMEMBER: CHAPTER MEETINGS ARE *ALWAYS* THE 2ND THURSDAY OF THE MONTH

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS

Please Wear Tuskegee Airmen Marked Clothing to Meetings to Show Uniformity

Good Day, we are already in the third month of the year and so much is happening. I have shared with you a calendar of events for the year and it is always changing. We shall receive a report on the first two months of the year and here are some of the happenings that are already in place from now until the Labor Day weekend.

March 16, 2016	Urban League Dinner and Special Event Distinguished Warrior
April 9, 2017	Young Eagles at the City Airport
April 28, 2017	Women in Aviation
April 29, 2017	Michigan Military Space Heroes Museum Recognition of Two Heroes 6 to 8 PM Saginaw, Michigan-several folks invited
May 19, 2017	Starbase at Selfridge ANG Base 300 Students invited to participate
May 21, 2017	Young Eagles at the City Airport
May 26 – 28, 2017	City Airport 26th – B O Davis, School Day 300 students 27th – Chapter and Museum Day 300 28th Fly IN
June 23-25, 2017	Detroit River Days Air Show
June 26, 2017	Ford Fireworks
August 3-5, 2017	Tuskegee Airmen, Inc Convention in Orlando, Florida
August 19– 20, 2017	Selfridge Air National Guard Base 100th Anniversary 18th Family and Friends
September 2 – 4, 2017	Thunder Over Michigan, Willow Run 75th Anniversary

There are ten Original Airmen that are members. Have you visited or contacted any of them. They would love to hear from you. On another note Hugh Barrington is in a rehab center and Uncle Al's wife is in an ICU. Let them know that you Love them.

Also, please bring your Laptops so that EAA background clearances can be completed.

Be Blessed,

Miguel Thornton

President

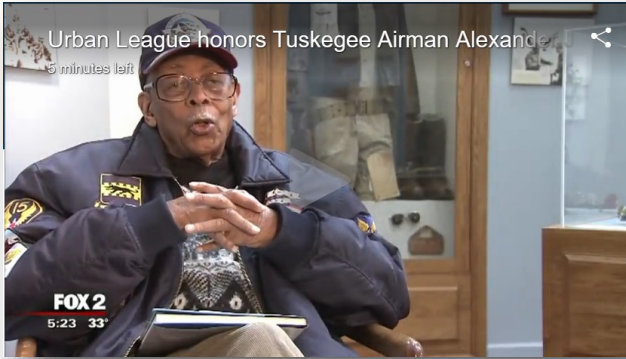
Detroit Chapter

Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.

The Hawk's Cry II



LOCAL HAPPENINGS



Urban League honors Tuskegee Airman Alexander Jefferson

UPDATED: MAR 17 2017 07:07PM EDT

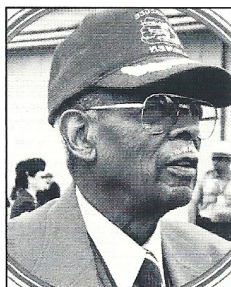
(WJBK) - Dedicated. Determined. Courageous. The Tuskegee Airmen were the first African-American military pilots in the United States. One of those pilots - a Detroit native who was honored last night at the Detroit Urban League's salute to Distinguished Warriors **Lt. Col. Alexander Jefferson** helped to win two wars. He fought the Nazis in the skies over Europe and returned to fight racism right here at home. They were called The Red Tails and every

time they flew, they made history. Before the Tuskegee Airmen of World War II, no African-American had ever been a United States military pilot. Urban League honors Tuskegee Airman Alexander Jefferson. "We knew that we were literally walking on quicksand because of the attitude of others of the whole society at that time," Alexander said. Their stories so famous, they've been made into films like this one about Detroit native - Lt. Col. Alexander Jefferson: "Red Tail Captured, Red Tail Free." "I'm a survivor and I realize it," he said. In 1942 Jefferson was sworn into the United States Army Reserves and in April 1943, he reported to Tuskegee Army Air Field to begin flight training. "We went through a period of nine months at Tuskegee Army Airfield where you really become a pilot," he said. The military just like the rest of the country was segregated, and some didn't believe African-American pilots could do the job - in part due to a 1925 report that made cruel and inaccurate statements. "The Army War College Evaluation of the Negro in 1925 ... held that the Black man was physically unqualified for combat duty ... mentally inferior ... could not control himself in the face of danger ... " "This is the attitude of the colonels and officers that met us and what we had to overcome," Jefferson said. Jefferson continued his training at Selfridge Army Air Field Base and it was a battle on the home front to win the respect they deserved and unappreciated. "These are the words I'll remember 'till I die, 'Gentleman this is my airfield as long as I'm in command there will be no between white and colored officers. Are there any questions?'" Not long after that Jefferson was sent to Europe assigned to the 332nd "Red Tail" fighter group: "My role was a fighter pilot, escorting the bombers from Italy to Germany, Italy to Czechoslovakia, flying P51 Mustangs, having a heck of a good time," Jefferson said. The Red Tails were fierce, skilled fighter pilots known for their bravery, protecting and clearing pathways for bombers. Jefferson flew 18 missions but on his 19th, he was shot down. "That's where German 20 mm came up through the floor and went out through the top of the ceiling," Jefferson said. "And the darn fire came up out of the floor, burned the gloves. I had to pull up and bail out." He

spent the rest of the war in a POW camp, drawing pictures to occupy his time. After being liberated by Gen. George Patton in April of 1945, he saw the worst of humanity. "You could smell it a mile before you got there, because the ovens were still warm," he said. "A room in the barracks piled high with eyeglasses, another room filled with shoes, railroad cars with the doors locked filled with bodies. Dachau (concentration camp)." The war was over, but for Jefferson and the other African-American pilots, they were returning home to another fight. "Two or three thousand men jubilant," he said. "We get into the harbor in New York, the Statue of Liberty, and going down the gangplank at the bottom a little white soldier



(saying) 'Whites to the right and (n-words) to the left.' "After nine months in Germany as a prisoner of war, segregation, segregation, segregation." It was a cold homecoming - but their impact couldn't be denied. Their record of excellence led to the desegregation of the Armed Forces. In 1948 President Harry Truman signed an executive order ending segregation in the military. The Tuskegee Airmen - who always knew "failure was not an option" helped write that history. "When we leave, we hope we leave a good trail," Jefferson said. A decorated serviceman - Alexander Jefferson is a man of discipline, dedication and determination. A family man. A man of faith. A teacher who helps us all learn from the past so we can help build a brighter, more inclusive future. "I've had a darn, good stinking life," he said. "God has been very good to me."



Alexander Jefferson

Alexander Jefferson, Lieutenant Colonel USAF Retired, born Detroit, Michigan, 15 November 1921.

Graduate; Chadsey High School Detroit: Bachelor of Science Degree, Clark College, Atlanta, Georgia: Graduate work in Chemistry, Howard University Washington DC: M.S. of Education; Wayne State University, Detroit.

In January 1944, graduated from pilot training course at Tuskegee Army Air Field followed by three months of Combat Training at Selfridge Field, Michigan. He served as a P-51 fighter pilot with the Red Tail, 332nd Fighter Group, 301st Fighter Squadron in Ramitelli, Italy. In the course of providing protection from enemy aircraft, he flew 18 long range escort missions for B-17 and B-24 bombers. On August 12, 1944, three days prior to the invasion of Southern France, he was shot down by ground fire while strafing radar stations on the coast. Captured by German troops and interned for nine months as a prisoner of war, he spent the first five months in Stalag Luft III, 80 miles east of Berlin on the Oder River.

On January 29, 1945, when the Russians started their offensive, the prisoners, American, British and French, were transferred to Stalag VIIA, Mooseburg, approximately 20 miles north of Dachau. Liberated by American forces on the 29th of April 1945, he visited Dachau to witness the results of the atrocities committed by the Nazis.

He was discharged from active duty in 1947 and retired from the reserves in 1969 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Following the war, he became an elementary school science teacher in the City of Detroit. He retired as an assistant principal in 1979. He is an active member of various church, educational and alumni organizations. He is one of the founders of the Detroit Chapter of the Tuskegee Airman (which is the original chapter) and is a member of the Tuskegee Airmen Speaker Bureau.

As a Life Member of the Silver Falcon Association, he served on a voluntary basis as an Admissions Counselor for the United States Air Force Academy. He is a Life Member of American Ex-Prisoner of War and is a Perpetual Member of the Military Order of the World Wars. On October 14, 1995, he was enshrined into the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame.

MILITARY AWARDS: Purple Heart Medal, Air Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, POW medal, Air Force Presidential Unit Citation American Defense Service Medal, American Campaign Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, National Defense Reserve Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Air Force Longevity Service Award Bronze Star, Congressional Gold Medal and French Knight of the Legion of Honor Medal



Urban League of Detroit
& Southeastern Michigan
Since 2016



AWARD WINNER



LOCAL HAPPENINGS

The Hawk's Cry II



LOCAL HAPPENINGS



The Hawk's Cry II



LOCAL HAPPENINGS



Google Photos



To See More Photos..Click on Heading

2017 Urban League of Detroit Distinguished Warrior Awards Dinner

Mar 16-Apr 12

DOTA Signs Replica Cowl of Famed P-51

Eric Palmer/Larry Sargent
During a recent touring of the National Historical Museum of the Tuskegee Airmen, an attendee got an opportunity to have Detroit Chapter DOTA Lt **Col Alexander** sign a replica of the cowl of the P-51 that he flew during WW2. Notice the name MARGO on the nose.



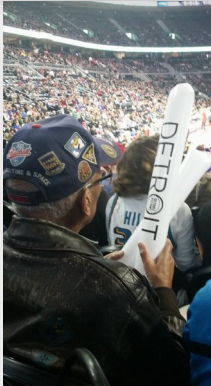
www.tuskegeemuseum.org

LOCAL HAPPENINGS

DOTAs Take in Detroit Pistons Game

Beverley Kindle-Walker

On the night the Detroit Pistons retired the number of Piston's great, Ben Wallace, Detroit Chapter DOTAs **Lt Col Alexander Jefferson** and **Sgt Frederick Henry** visit the arena. Many thanks to the McKinney Foundation and the staff of the Palace of Auburn Hills for the excellent tickets! Praise God!



DOTAs Visit Bert's Warehouse

Eric Palmer/ Larry Sargent

Detroit Chapter DOTAs **Lt Col Alexander Jefferson** and **Sgt Frederick Henry** visit Bert's Warehouse for top notch local entertainment and eats. Pictured to the right are Larry Sargent, DOTA Fred Henry, DOTA Alexander Jefferson and Bill Wellborn pose with Bert of Bert's Marketplace, which is in the Eastern Market. Chapter member "Fast" Freddie Anderson DJ's there. Visit sometime. The food is Good!!!!!!



LOCAL HAPPENINGS



DOTA Visits Tampa, Florida Church

Eric Palmer/ Larry Sargent

Detroit Chapter DOTA **Lt Col Alexander** visit Detroit Chapter President, Miguel Thornton's church in Tampa, Florida and gets the opportunity to speak briefly to an approximately 2000 person congregation. Pictured with the two of them is Clutch, one of the church members.

DOTAs Gets Upgraded "Specs"

Eric Palmer/ Bill Welborne

Detroit Chapter DOTA **Fred Henry** was seen on television last month by Mrs. Mary Parker, the grand-daughter of a World War II pacific campaign bomber pilot. She noticed his aged, but reliable glasses were bent and out of shape. She made a decision to call channel 50 and said she wanted to replace them with a new pair. She wanted to show her support and appreciation for the Tuskegee Airmen. We at the Detroit Chapter would like to thank her for her kindness and appreciation and let her know that she will always be a friend. *In the photo left to right: Tony Stevenson, Fred Henry, Mary Parker, Bill Welborne*



The First Young Eagles Rally of 2017

REMEMBER

The EAA Chapter 1351 Sponsored
Young Eagles Rally
Every 2nd Sunday of the Month until
October
At the Coleman A. Young International
Airport (City Airport)
Between 10:00 am to 15:00 pm
Ages 8 to 17



*Aviation's International
Historic Inaugural Speaker's Event
Presents*

Air "Field of Dreams"

May 6, 2017

2600 Airport Road, Windsor Unit 106 YQC Airport

Hours 11 am until 6 pm



Admission \$20/person

Free Admission for 364 Squadron Air Cadets (must show ID Badge)

To purchase tickets call 226-787-2795 or email airfieldofdreams@gmail.com
or at the Air Cadet Hangar Tuesday evenings 6pm– 9pm. (2600 Airport Rd.)

Visit our Facebook page for more information;

Aviation's International Historic Speakers Event Air Field of Dreams

- Scheduled guest speakers
- Aviation World on site
- Admission includes tours of CH2A and Air Cadet Hangar
- Static Displays
- Silent Auction
- Meet and greet
- Free Parking
- Autographs
- Photo opportunities
- Souvenirs, Books
- Lunch available for purchase

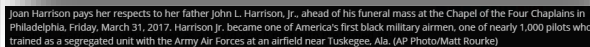


THE TUSKEGEE AIRSHOW

W
avworld.ca

NAV CANADA





American Airlines

Why I Fly Young Eagles

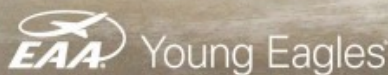
"My neighbor, Robert Shurney, a NASA engineer, got a friend of his to take me flying in his Cessna 172 when I was 12 years old. After that flight I spent many hours building airplanes and rockets. I eventually earned a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering, and later in life I dedicated myself to educating other underrepresented youth to careers in aviation."

"I started EAA Chapter 1351 around the turn of the century with the sole purpose of doing Young Eagles rallies. Several of the Young Eagles I flew went on to pursue careers in aviation, and several are in the Tuskegee Airmen Flight Academy, an aviation program run by the Tuskegee Airmen National Museum, where a dedicated student can earn a pilot certificate."

> **Brian Smith, Ph.D., EAA 495180**

President and founder of EAA Chapter 1351 in

Detroit, Michigan. More than 750 Young Eagles flown to date.



Visit YoungEagles.org/volunteers
to become a Young Eagles volunteer pilot.

EAA Young Eagles Presenting Sponsor

EAA Young Eagles Flight Plan Partners



Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors

2009 Edition

Phone Numbers

Bereavement Counseling.....	1-202-461-6530
Education.....	1-888-442-4551
Headstones and Markers.....	1-800-697-6947
Health Care.....	1-877-222-8387
Homeless veterans.....	1-877-222-8387
Home Loans.....	1-877-827-3702
Life Insurance.....	1-800-669-8477
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.....	1-800-273-8255
Pension Management Center.....	1-877-294-6380
Special Health Issues.....	1-800-749-8387

**Telecommunication Device
for the Deaf (TDD) 1-800-829-4833
VA Benefits 1-800-827-1000**

Web Sites

VA Home Page.....	www.va.gov
Education Benefits.....	www.gibill.va.gov
Health Care Eligibility.....	www.va.gov/healtheligibility
Burial and Memorial Benefits.....	www.cem.va.gov
Returning Service Members.....	www.oefoif.va.gov
Home Loan Guaranty	www.homeloans.va.gov
Records	www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel
VA Benefit Payment Rates.....	www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/rates
VA Forms.....	www.va.gov/vaforms
Mental Health.....	www.mentalhealth.va.gov
Federal Jobs.....	www.usajobs.opm.gov
Veterans Preference.....	www.opm.gov/veterans/index.asp
Employment Assistance.....	www.vetsuccess.gov
Veterans Employment and Training.....	www.dol.gov/vets

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program

Life Insurance.....	www.insurance.va.gov
Department of Defense.....	www.defenselink.mil



EDITOR'S CORNER

Original Tuskegee Airmen Signed Certificates of Appreciation

Refreshed with new background and now with the
signatures of 12 Detroit Chapter DOTA's.

The certificates come in six (6) different ribbon color
combinations;

- Yellow text on Black background
- Black on Yellow
- Yellow on Red
- Red on Yellow
- Yellow on Blue
- Blue on Yellow
- Green on White and
- White on Green

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ATTENTION ALL CHAPTER MEMBERS: To ensure we have adequate coverage of local activities, please get your local and recent Tuskegee Airmen related news stories to the editor ASAP. Contact info inside

